A Letter from Mr. Thomas Machel *of* Kirkbythore *in* Weſtmorland *to* Sr. W. D. March 25, 1684. *concerning ſome* Antiquities *found there.*

YOur love to *Antiquity*, and my Obligations to you are ſuch, that I cannot omit to give you an Account of a ſtrange *Well*, diſcovered here about a week ſince by the *foot* of an *Horſe*, which ſtumbled upon it; and therefore may be called the Fountain *Hypocrene*.

'Tis in the Street of *Kirkbythore* by the Bridge-end, on the North ſide of the River *Trout-Beeck*, the Antient Boundary 'twixt the Lordſhip of *Crackanthorp* (my Brothers Eſtate) and this of *Kirkbythore*, and is about ten yards diſtant from it, in the common Road; and as many yards diſtant from the great *Roman Cauſey*, which leads to *Carlile*, and goes betwixt it, and a place called the *Burwens*, being part of the *Ruines* of *Whelp-Caſtle*, on the Eaſt ſide of it: And 'tis very ſtrange that a *Well* ſhould be digged ſo near to the *River*, unleſs perhaps the *Caſtle-walls* have gone betwixt them, and the way run through it; as at *Maiden-Caſtle*, on the top of *Stanemore*.

It hath been covered with a Plank of wood about nine inches thick, in the faſhion of a *Potlid*: but decayed and macerated to the colour and conſiſtance of a *Peat* or *Turfe*; inſomuch, that I could hardly conjecture what wood it was made of; but I ſuppoſe *Oake*. And above this was gravel and pavement about a yard thick, which (being tendered by the late great *Froſt* and ſwelling of the Spring) eaſily gave way to the *Horſes* foot.

Inſtead of *Walls*, were two large *wooden Veſſels*, one upon another, like *Hogſheads*, or *Wine-pipe*, with *Bung-holes* in them, about three inches *Diameter*: and the plowings for the heads were fair to be ſeen. They were made of *Firr* (whenceſoever they came) above an inch thick; each of them in depth, by a *Perpendicular*, 6 foot at the leaſt, at the *Heads*, in circumference no leſs then 8 foot, being in *Diameter* 2 foot and 8 inches: and in the middle 7 foot and 4 inches, being in *Diameter* no leſs then 3 foot 5 inches and ½. The wood was found, but withal very ſpongy by reaſon of the water.

At the bottom about 5 yards deep, were 4 Planks of wood laid *quadrangular* wiſe, ſupported with a ſtone at every Corner, to bear up the *Fabric*, and let in water through the gravel

gravel and ſand, which lay looſe in the bottom about a yard deeper, as was tryed by a Spit, and theſe alſo found (though the Cover was rotten) becauſe not ſo much expoſed to the Air.

The men that ſcearched it, having my permiſſion, (for it lieson my ſide of the high way) flattered themſelves with great hopes of ſome *Treaſure*, when they ſaw the appearance of a *Hogſhead* ſet on end: and their expectation was therefore the ſtronger, becauſe they could not poſſibly imagine that a *Well* ſhould be placed in an *open Street*, in a *publick high way*, and ſo near to the *River*: but they only found *Fabritian Plate*; old *earthen-Veſſels*, with pieces of *Urnes*, one piece of a *drinking Glaſs*, and ſeveral *Sandals*, which may ſerve to beſpeak the *Antiquity* of it, for ſure 'tis long ſince any *Sandals* were worn in this *Country*.

The *earthern-Veſſels* were of very fine *Metal* (if I may ſo call it) of a *Brick like* colour, and in ſeveral *Forms*; But the moſt (and moſt remarkable) were, like a *Baſon* or *Poſſet-Cup*, the Bowl, *ſemiglobular*; the foot, a *Ring*: ſome were in *Diameter* about 8 inches, and in depth on the inſide, more then $3\frac{1}{2}$, ſome more, ſome leſs, as appeared by the *Fragments* which came to my hand. They were (for the moſt part) very finely imboſſed, but three more eſpecially, *viz.* 1. One with a *Vine branch*, having a Figure in every turning, and in the firſt place a *naked Man* ſtanding alone upon his left foot, the other leg croſs, and holding his left hand down towards his back, his right towards his belly, with a branch of *Lawrel* of 3 ſprigs in it, one of which turns up to his face-wards over the crooke or bending of his *Arm*; and at his feet is a *Branch* of *Lawrel* and a *Bloſſom* or *Flower*: In the next is a *Vine-leaf*, 2 *Bloſſoms* at the bottom; and at the top 2 *Peacocks* regardant: In the next is *Victory* (as I take it) *viz.* an *Angel* or *Genius* holding in its right hand (the Arm ſtretched out, and the face looking towards the Man) a *Garland* of *Lawrel*; in the left, a *Sprig* of the ſame; and two ſprigs likewiſe are at the foot with *Flowers* or *Bloſſoms*, and one *Flower* in the middle betwixt the *Garland* and one of thoſe *Sprigs*. In the next is a *Vine-leaf* the ſame as before, in the next is *Victory*, and ſo by turns, till it ends with a *Vine-leaf* next the *Man*. And upon it are alſo ſome *Goth like Characters* of the leſſer ſort, but dim and obſcure. Another of theſe *Pots* is adorned with *Circles* and *Semicircles*, in one of theſe *Circles* is the Figure of a *Man*, ſitting on a *Plinth* or ſquare ſtone; in all the reſt are fluttering *Genii*. In ſome of the

Semi-

Semicircles are *Lions* and *Goats* (or ſome ſuch like *Creatures*) here one, there another; all ſingle and current: and near the bottom, are *Stags* in Courſe and *Gray hounds* purſuing, with an *Inſcription* (in a *Goth like* Character of the greater ſort) which ſee Fig. 4. This may be *Paulini*. An Inſcription with the like Characters, is to be ſeen at *Burrowbrigg* and publiſht by Dr. *Liſter*. And they have been careful in preſerving theſe; for *this* and ſome other, having been broke, are crammed (or rather ſoldered) with lead.

3. The third ſort, is yet far more beautiful then any of the reſt, being adorned with *Gray-hounds* very well moulded, and in full purſuite of *Stags* and *Hinds*, and the *Wild Boar*; upon which I diſcovered the ſame *Inſcription*, as in the other. And tho I am not ſo vain, as to ſay this relates to our *Coats* of *Arms*, yet having ſo near an *Affinity* with it, both in Creaſt and Charge; (*a*. the *Stags* head, *b*. 3. *Gray hounds* current. *c*. *Wheip Caſtle*) and being found at the *place* which we came from (as is ſaid and believed) I cannot but take ſome notice of it; and have ſent you a piece to look upon, which will (without doubt) give you more ſatisfaction both for the matter and colour of it, then any *Deſcription* in writing can do. But I deſire you to return it again.

There were ſeveral other broken *Inſcriptions*; and one above the reſt upon the *bottom* of a plane *Diſh* or *Platter* (on the inſide of it) writ in this manner, Fig. 5. But whether it ſtands for *Veſpatian Imperator* or *Domitianus*, or neither of them, I cannot tell.

As to the *Glaſs*, there was but a very ſmall *fragment* of it, I can ſcarce gueſs the *Figure*, but I think it a *flute Glaſs* made like a *Tunnel* or *Spire* inverſed. But this is remarkable, that it hath been as thick as a *Barly Corn*.

The *Urns* were of a leaden colour inclining to black; one had been large, 2 inches thick in the ſide of the *Pot*, but how big I know not, for there was a ſherd only brought to me like half of a *Shield*: I have now the top alſo, being in *Diameter* from outſide to outſide 7 inches, of which the *Roll* is 2 inches and the Mouth 3 inches. The Neck yet ſtreighter, and only thick there, one *third* of an inch. The *Figure* of which you have. And many ſuch are found at this *Town*, ſome of which have *Ears* or *Handles* as thick as my Arm-wriſt, and their *Heads* and *Mouths* much of this bigneſs, but thicker and ſtronger, ſuch as that Fig. 6. into which I could not thruſt in my hand. But the other was almoſt intire and whole, tho a very ſmall one

one; in depth or height 8 ½ inches, the *Diameter* of it 6½ inches which is in *Circumference* 19½ wide; in the *Mouth* almoſt 3½; in the Neck ſomewhat more then 2½; by the *Diameter*: the bottom well nigh as big as the top, excepting the Ring; and the Body in thickneſs the fifth part of an inch: but thicker ſomewhat at the top and the botrom.

But the *Sandals* were moſt admired by me, becauſe I never ſaw any before. There were ſome for *Men*, ſome for *Women*, and ſome for *Children*; all ſhap'd by their feet, ſpreading more to the outſide then to the inſide: and ſome were very large and ſome very crooked as this in the Cut. The leather was freſh, of which they were made, but very tender when it came to be ſpread upon a Laſt. Each conſiſted of three principal parts; an upper leather (or rathe heel piece with 2 *Tabs* on each ſide) an inner Soal, long 11½ inches, broad 3¾ [a]; of 3 or 4 Soals ſtitched together with leathern thongs, and an outer Soal [b] of 2, ſtuck full of *Nails* with little round heads (ſo decayed and rotten that I could ſcarce diſcern them to be *Iron*) plated on the inſide: And to the upper leather (3 fold in the heel piece [c]) is fixed betwixt them and ſowed with leather, or rather tacked, which the *Iron Nails* do help to defend. Yet I think ſome *Womens* (of the better ſort) had no Nails at all [d]. And of theſe there is one well worth the *Obſervation*, of *Spaniſh-like* leather and curious workmanſhip, being exactly ſtitch'd down round about the fore piece long 2⅓ inches with a pretty *Label* [e] of the ſame piece, hanging from it, for faſhion ſake ſurely; ſince 'tis too ſlender to be of any uſe. As ſmall in the ſtring as the 15 *h.* part of an inch. The Tongue at the end broad half an inch, long one inch, betwixt the two flouriſhes, which is the length of the ſmall ſtring, 8 parts in 10 of an inch, the two flouriſhes take up the reſt [a]. The Figure of which you may ſee. [e]

When I firſt diſcovered *them*, I thought peradventure, that the people here, in former times might have worn ſuch *Shoes*, as they do in *Ireland*, and the *High lands* of *Scotland*, which they call *Broagues*: and that theſe might be ſuch; but having the opportunity of diſcourſing an *Highlander* that travelled by, while we were digging: and another *Gentleman* the very next day, who had travelled thoſe *Countryes*; I was fully ſatisfied that they were not *Broagues*; for thoſe (they ſay) have but one ſingle Soal, and theſe have ſix, And ſo I leave them and the whole matter to your Conſideration, *&c.*

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Fig: 1.

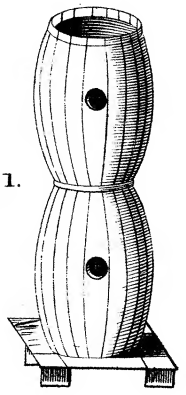


Fig: 2.

Fig: 4.

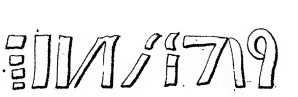
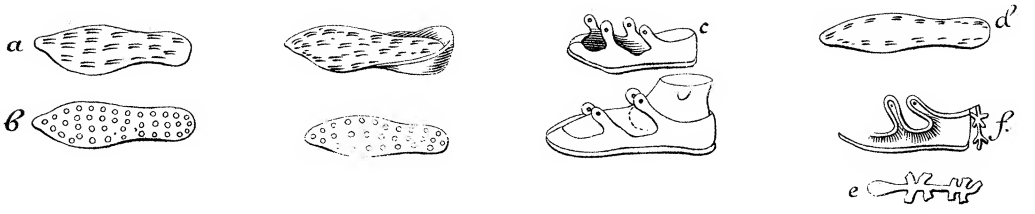
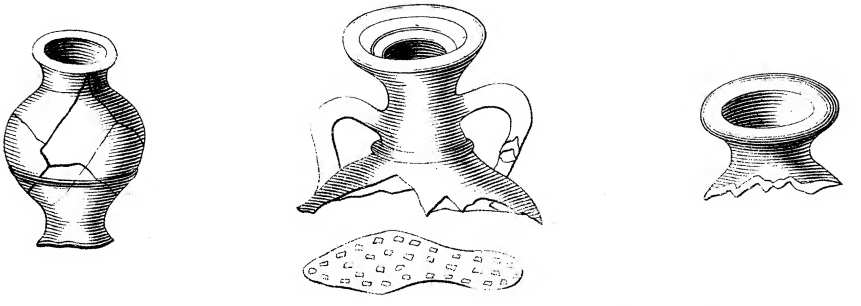


Fig: 3.

Fig: 5.





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